

# **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **REDWOOD NATIONAL AND STATE PARKS**

### **Fall Prescribed Fire Activities Announced**



**REDWOOD  
NATIONAL & STATE  
PARKS**



National Park Service Superintendent Steve Chaney announced today that Redwood National and State Parks will conduct a series of prescribed burns this fall in the prairies and oak woodlands in the Bald Hills east of Orick, as well as in Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park.

The prescribed fire season in the parks will begin in September or early October as weather conditions permit. This year fire will be used as a management tool in five specific burn units in the Bald Hills: Upper Elk Camp Prairie, Dolason Prairie, Williams Ridge, Lower Lyons Ranch Prairie, and South Boundary Prairie. All five units combined, total about 600 acres. An additional 150 acres will be burned at Elk (Boyes) Prairie in Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park.

For thousands of years, Yurok, Tolowa, Chilula, and Hupa people managed prairies and oak woodlands, and some coastal areas that are now within the parks with periodic fire to keep them open. Burning also provided grazing and hunting areas for elk and deer, maintained important resources like tanoak trees and various basket weaving materials, kept trail and travel corridors open, and lessened the prevalence of parasites like ticks in the prairies. Settlers who homesteaded the prairies continued the practice of broadcast burning until it was outlawed by the state in the 1930s. Since then, many of the prairies and oak woodlands have become encroached with Douglas fir and other conifers which can eventually eliminate these important plant communities.

The parks' 2010 Fire Management Plan provides for the use of fire to restore natural and cultural processes, manage exotic plants and conifers encroaching into prairie and oak woodland plant communities, and to interpret and educate the public about the role of fire in the parks. The parks have successfully used prescribed fires to achieve these objectives since the early 1980's.

If you are in the parks over the next couple of months, there will likely be additional activity and equipment on and near Bald Hills Road. Smoke may linger on the roadways and traffic control may be in place. Please be cautious for your safety as well as those working on the prescribed burns.

For further information, please contact Jim Wheeler at (707) 465-7764.

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